THE CRITIC BEHIND BARBED WIRE . . By Herbert J. Muller

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THE Saturday Review OF LITERATURE

VOLUME XXVI No. 39 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1943 FIFTEEN CENTS

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by James Thurber

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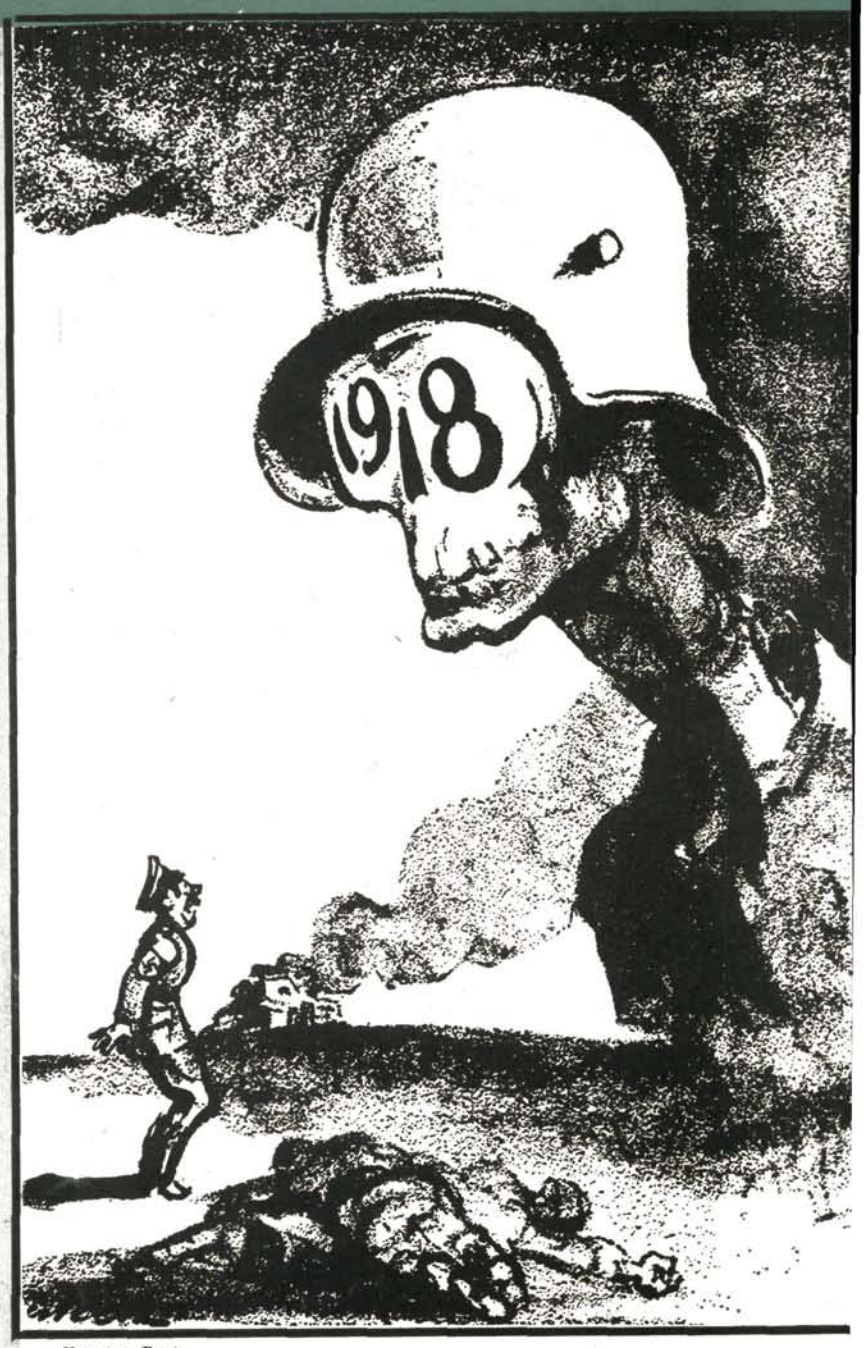

—*Houston Post.*

"WHERE HAVE I MET YOU BEFORE?"

(See page 6)

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The Saturday Review of Literature

September 25, 1943

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary. Subscription, $5 a year; $6 in Canada and other countries; $4 for service men in U. S. At least 3 weeks' notice required for changes of address; both old and new addresses must be given. Printed in U. S. A. Vol. XXVI, No. 39, September 25, 1943. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Copyright, 1943.

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The Critic Behind Barbed Wire

If He Wishes, He Can End His Self-Imposed Internment

HERBERT J. MULLER

IN these days, professional thinkers and writers are mutually prey to the awful suspicion that their work has been ineffectual, and is now dispensable. Although Malcolm Cowley has protested that from the beginning they did actively enter the struggle against Nazism, "drawing up and signing petitions, speaking in smoky rooms and big drafty auditoriums," even this exposure to drafts does not seem heroic; and the petitions and speeches apparently went up with the smoke. Nevertheless I assume that there is still need of thinking, not only about how to save our civilization, but about the interests and values that make it worth saving. There remain responsibilities that are not necessarily to be discharged in auditoriums. At least this is a good time to go back to first principles, basic assumptions—to all that "goes without saying" and too often, therefore, without thinking. And so with the literary critic. If only because his professional services are not in great demand right now, he might take stock of his means and ends.

To begin at the beginning, then, if literature is at all important criticism is not a superflous or unnatural activity. Analysis may reduce it to a matter of taste, and this in turn to an elemental liking, as unarguable as a liking for spinach; in theory, we may enjoy literature without benefit of criticism. In fact, however, even a simple poem is a very complex, sophisticated thing, and criticism is an inevitable phase in the rhythm of our enjoyment of it. The immediate experience is conditioned by previous education and enriched by subsequent reflection. Reflection is also the means of linking a particular enjoyment with other enjoyments. Criticism is organized reflection, providing more systematic and more extensive associations, making possible a still richer experience.

In this sense criticism may be called "creative." Yet it is a different activity from that which creates the work of art. Because critics are naturally pleased to think that they, too, are artists, they are always tempted to agree with Croce, that they realize their true function by reproducing the artist's intuitive impression, in a moment of esthetic activity identical with creation. They no doubt have such moments, and are better critics because of them. Nevertheless Croce does not make clear why the great artist, with his exceptional powers of expression, should need their work at all; there is a certain conceit in the implication that they convey what he failed to, do his job for him. The serious objection, however, is that these flattering notions only insure the perpetual misunderstanding between artists and critics, a misunderstanding sprung from the tacit assumption of most critics that the aims, attitudes, and experiences of the two parties are identical. Intimate as are their relations, the critic properly uses a different vocabulary, cultivates different states of mind, emphasizes different attitudes. He has to be wary, for instance, of the black magic of words, which it is the very business of poets to exploit; he cannot afford to be either so artful or so artless. Let him be lyrically appreciative and he is still not writing a poem. Let him consider how different our histories of literature would be if they had been written only by poets, and only for poets.

Criticism is, indeed, whatever men have a mind to make it; but its peculiar function must lie in what distinguishes it from the creative activity. Its problem is not how to reproduce the work of art but what to do to and for this work. And about this problem there are many minds. For centuries the literary critic has acted as historian, curator, philosopher, high priest, grammarian, doctor, psychologist, or simple tourist guide. But at all times he is disposed to be exclusive, to assume that a useful kind of activity should drive all competitors off the market. Joel Spingarn's manifesto on the "new criticism" is typical. "We have done with the race, the time, the environment of a poet's work as an element in Criticism"—and with the topic sentence of each paragraph he exterminated another species of critic (lower case). As a matter of fact, we have done with none of them; all the species are still alive and kicking. Nor should we have done with any of them. On the face of it, all this varied activity is pertinent. All contributes something to a fuller understanding, richer appreciation, and finer appraisal of literature. Short of this very general purpose, there is no one "true" aim of criticism.

OFFHAND, it seems reasonable to demand (with Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, and others) that the critic confine himself

Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom demand that the critic confine himself to the values of literature.

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to the purely esthetic meanings and values of literature. The critic's specialized job in the division of intellectual labor must be the study of literature *as literature*. This study, moreover, has been notoriously neglected. Critics have dwelt upon the intellectual content of literature, its moral value, or more recently its social origins and uses. In other words, they have been concerned chiefly with what it has in common with other activities, used it chiefly as an illustration of something else. Like Matthew Arnold, our ambitious critics keep turning into social philosophers.

Yet this is not simply a deplorable development. Literature is never merely literature, its meanings are never merely esthetic. Regard it as primarily a heightening of consciousness rather than a criticism of life, call its social meanings and uses ulterior; still there can be no vivid consciousness of nothing in particular for no particular reason, and however literature begins we are naturally concerned also with where it ends, its whole import and consequence. "If you aim only at the poetry in poetry," T. S. Eliot has said, "there is no poetry." Simply as we value it, we cannot keep it "pure."

The critic may appreciate, analyze, interpret, philosophize, propagate, exhort—to repeat, he may legitimately do whatever he has a mind to. But it follows that we ought to know just what he is doing. He is always prone to fall into a confusion of aims, as between that of setting forth an explanation and that of inducing elevated emotions; his readers are always prone to welcome the confusion as a sign of wholeness or wholesomeness. It also follows—however depressing the thought—that all criticism calls for further criticism, to supplement when not to discount. All interest limits because it focuses attention; all perspectives have shadows because they are perspectives; all attitudes are angular because they are frames of thought. The soundest critic still needs to be sounded: he may be admirably balanced but not know what he is balanced on, he may be admirably posed but simply stay poised and never take off. Above all, the brilliant, original critic calls for further criticism; for he is seldom catholic, he is apt to forget the obvious, he is provocative because also merely provoking.

THIS responsibility leads, finally, to the source of all difficulty in criticism. The great effort of a sincere man, de Gourmont observed, is to erect his personal impressions into laws. The effort can appear as a naive arrogance: the critic announces that what he now likes, all men must always like—or even that they must never like anything else. It always disposes to a militaristic attitude: he mobilizes a large standing army of arguments and then, like Samuel Johnson, talks for victory. Nevertheless this effort is indeed the mark of sincerity, the measure of all responsible thought. And the issues it raises are especially difficult in literary criticism, because the work of art is a highly individualized creation. Let us put the problem at its worst. Limitation, partiality, prejudice are avowed in the mere recognition of *individuality*. In a sense, moreover, one is never even the same individual twice, never responding in exactly the same way or to exactly the same environment. Literature, accordingly, is a host of unique works created by individual artists at a particular time in a particular culture, and experienced by a host of individual readers at different moments in a different culture.

At first glance, the picture does not make sense. Some critics have therefore denied the possibility of any objective judgment whatever. Jules Lemaitre declared that the critic could never go beyond defining his own impressions at a "given moment"; Anatole France declared that he could only relate the adventures of his soul among masterpieces. Yet this attitude makes still less sense. The fancy-free impressionist is inconsistent from the moment he sallies forth for adventures (usually all dressed up and willing to pose for posterity). He begins by tacitly assuming the value of masterpieces, he subscribes to the general opinion that certain works are masterpieces, he relates his adventures because they bear on the general experience—he depends on the plain fact of common sense. His fallacy is a very simple one. He forgets that all experience comes at given moments, to scientists as well as to art-lovers, but that its meaning is not restricted to those moments; otherwise it could have no meaning. He forgets the basic uniformities that underlie the unique particulars: the uniformities in the structure of man and the natural environment which unite all adventurers in a common adventure in a common world, and without which we could not even grasp particulars, define impressions. Significant criticism is possible for precisely the reason that literature, science, history, society itself are possible.

Practical activity gives us the obvious lead here. The plain man has no trouble going beyond the momentary impression. He can arrive at general conclusions short of universal laws; he can pass sensible judgments and make sensible choices without benefit of absolute standards; he can recognize a superior steak though he has not defined the Ideal Steak or the essence of Steakness. So may the critic generalize and theorize without categorical principles, discriminate and evaluate without infallible touchstones. Like all activity, criticism is an adventure; its history refutes any claim to certainty. Nevertheless it does have a connected history, and the history can be read with profit.

THUS the first lesson is that standards are necessary but also necessarily general. The critic should take into account the individuality of every writer and the uniqueness of every work, the rich particularity that is the stuff of all art and the source of its peculiar value. Similarly he should at once allow for in theory and discount in practice the inevitable "politics of taste." Granted that there can be no substitute for fine taste, the most sensitive critic still needs to qualify his actual likings, base his judgment on more than his actual experience in literature. I get a deeper pleasure from Conrad, for instance, than from novelists whom as a critic I should rank higher; I get very little pleasure from some of the world's masterpieces, though I can see why the world considers them masterpieces; and if I am confessing a sad deficiency in taste, I am confident that no critic appreciates everything as it ought to be appreciated even by his own standards. This discounting of one's experience is admittedly dangerous, apt to lead to insincerity, hollowness, timid conventionality.

But some reserve seems advisable when we find so many sensitive contemporaries supercilious about Milton or merely contemptuous of Shelley, poets valued by generations of as sensitive readers. In their anxiety to get at the roots of everything, moreover, contemporaries often overlook the superficial, undignified, but constant element of mere fashion in literary tastes. The complex history of literature is

(*Continued on page* 18)

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Pathways to Berlin

BACK DOOR TO BERLIN. By Wes Gallagher. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. 1943. 242 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by HENRY B. KRANZ

HOW was the job of the invasion of North Africa organized? Where did General Eisenhower work in these days? What is the true story of the political troubles the Allies had to face in Morocco, Algiers, and Tunisia? What happened at the Casablanca conference? And how was victory achieved?

Wes Gallagher, one of the ace correspondents in North Africa during the whole campaign, tries to answer these and many other questions. His "full story of the American coup" gives many details so far unknown to the general public.

We learn the number of men engaged. Major-General Patton, Jr., was commander of not more than 36,621 troops. Lieutenant-General Anderson's British First Army comprised not more than 22,506 men. Therefore the attempt to seize Algiers and Morocco would have failed before it started if the French troops had been in the slightest degree hostile. However, in many cases the French fought side by side with the British and Americans.

Not because the French obeyed Giraud—as he assured the Allied staff they would. They did not. They obeyed Admiral Darlan. Giraud had to go into hiding in Algiers to escape being shot as a traitor by Vichy officers and General Eisenhower sent Major-General Clark to negotiate with Darlan. Mr. Gallagher also tells us that, as small as Giraud's following was. it was many times that enjoyed by General de Gaulle. Giraud, Wes Gallagher says, is "a man who considers any discussion of politics beneath his dignity and who considers any questioning of his policy as an insult to his personal integrity." And General de Gaulle is "another temperamental French military man who has had as little political training as Giraud. He declined to accept the fact that he had less than ten per cent of the population of North Africa behind him."

Although the first phase of the invasion had been a full success, the second phase was almost a failure. The key to the situation was air supremacy, and the Germans were masters of the sky. The British and American soldiers fought like veterans. But the Allies lost the gamble.

The third phase of the invasion was a "battle of military logistics" and this battle was won by the Allied generals. 6.500,000 tons of war material were brought to Africa between the initial landings and mid-February, and the losses were less than two per cent. Axis losses in the same period were almost 33 per cent, because of Allied sea and air actions. During December and January British and American troops had been holding southern Tunisia "with a bluff and a prayer." But now they were building up their strength. After an initial Nazi victory they were regrouped and the show down brought an Allied victory while Montgomery's troops were breaking through the Mareth line.

This victory was not easily won. Mr. Gallagher says: "As usual, the British-American intelligence estimate was short. Allied intelligence estimated that Hitler had about 162,000 troops left in Tunisia. As proved later, the Germans had about 240,000 troops in the Tunisian bridgehead." Victory came after the German air opposition had been wiped out.

The Luftwaffe suffered its most crushing blow since the Battle of Britain. In six months, 1,757 Axis planes were destroyed in the air and almost as many on the ground.

"Back Door to Berlin" is a valuable addition to the number of books written about the occupation of North Africa. Mr. Gallagher has written a tight and accurate book. Unfortunately, without a map it is hardly possible to follow the military actions. And most of the detailed accounts of hand-to-hand fightings rather confuse than elucidate the strategic situations of one of the most spectacular exploits in all history.

SKYWAYS TO BERLIN. By Major John M. Redding and Captain Harold I. Leyshon. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1943. 290 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by
MAJOR JAMES FARBER, A. C.

NEWSPAPERMEN who can submerge their own personalities long enough to tell somebody else's story are rarities these days. Former newsmen Major Redding and Captain Leyshon have done this in their "Skyways to Berlin." But if it is not an "I Was There" book, it certainly is a "We Were There," being a superb collection of anecdotes and air history.

The authors assume the role of raconteurs, providing authenticity, credibility, and a good objective approach to their subject and a most welcome relief from the various and sundry arrogant narratives of numerous newshawks who have been currently deluging the market with stuff any two-year-experienced city-room reporter could write—if he had the chance.

"Skyways to Berlin" is the story of the scrapping First Wing of the famous Eighth United States Army Air Force, the same which is pasting Germany from one end to the other these days—and nights. The authors present their history in the form of a long succession of anecdotes and it is when they are giving you real color and smash-bang action that they excel themselves.

However, they take time out to become annoyed at such technicalities as the method of determining "ace"

—*Godal in* P.M., *New York.*

"Adolf, I still insist we should declare Berlin an open city."

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ratings and also, chiefly by inference, to sling a few shafts at what they term "desk strategists." But determining aerial dogfight scores is a headache; and mapping strategy almost always starts out at a desk. Hence it would seem that the authors might be a bit more charitable even to the point of skipping these matters entirely in favor of more, if not better, anecdotes.

The authors reach a real literary pinnacle in extracting every iota of drama from their material when they relate the tragic, desperate story of Sergeant Arizona Harris who kept his guns blazing, knocking off a Nazi bandit a few seconds before he met a watery death in his Flying Fortress. No reader of "Skyways to Berlin" will ever forget it. It belongs in the Army's timeless chronicles of individual heroism.

The authors speak of "teams" and write of what the Air Corps itself calls "responsibilities of an aircraft commander" without elucidating either. They assume, I suppose, that most readers know what these mean since so much information on air operations is floating around.

Fortunately, however, the reader learns for himself the deep-seated significance of these terms as he lives and breathes each anecdote with the participants. He comes to understand how bombardment success depends so much on a personal equation topped off by a commander who knows his responsibilities.

Much emphasis and many of the anecdotes are built around aerial gunfighting: Fortresses versus Nazi bandits (pursuits). Actually, the Army Air Forces officially place a reverse emphasis on this subject: gunfighting is of secondary importance in bombardment missions. It is the mission of a bomber to cover its target, lay its eggs, and get back safely. Thus, any fighting becomes incidental, tactically, no matter how desperate it is. But, since it is inevitable that a bombardment mission against a powerful and skilful enemy will bring out swarms of fighter aircraft, the defensive operations of individual Flying Fortresses really make the story. Military people will understand this but others probably won't. Hence I believe the authors might well have made the point.

The name of Major General Ira C. Eaker is frequently mentioned. Since he is not only the boss of the famed Eighth but frequently its actual combat leader as well, this is as it should be. I can but suggest that, if Major Redding and Captain Leyshon would do as good a job with a full-length biography of this officer as they have with their stories of his men, they would really have a book.

Pan-Germanism and the Future

THE HIDDEN ENEMY. THE GERMAN THREAT TO POST-WAR PEACE. By Heinz Pol. New York: Julian Messner. 1943. 268 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HANS W. WEIGERT

POL, a former assistant editor of the old liberal Berlin *Vossische Zeitung*, believes he has discovered the hidden enemy. This enemy is something much more powerful than the gang-organization of Nazism. The eternal German enemy, says Mr. Pol, is the Pan-German League, founded by four mysterious German gentlemen in the summer of 1870. For more than seventy years, its leaders have played a sinister role behind the curtain of the official German scene. Their power remained stable and decisive, according to Mr. Pol, while the German Reich went erratically through the phases of monarchy, Weimar democracy, and National Socialism. The Kaiser failed, so did the Weimar Republic, and now Hitler's hour has struck, too. But the Pan-Germans remain, an eternal and frightening menace. It is indeed not a small group which Mr. Pol lists as the nucleus of Pan-Germanism. He sees the Fifth Columnists of this imperialistic underground movement rampant among the representatives of heavy industry, the directors of big banks and insurance companies, the Army, the land-holding Junkers, the judiciary, the universities and schools, and any cultural institutions founded since 1933.

Mr. Pol's story of the fanatical banner-bearers of German imperialism, like Herr Class, the President of the Pan-German League, or General Bernhardi, another cool planner of German world conquest, is loosely knitted. It is intermingled with much too many personal reminiscences which picture young Mr. Pol rather than the German world he lived in. As a study of an important phase of modern history, the book is disappointing. There are some errors and the quotations from many authors do not mention the sources accurately. And, besides, Mr. Pol's story is not quite as new as he seems to think.

—*Raleigh News and Observer.*
"Hedgehog"

However, men and nations are forgetful. To remind us of the hidden enemy who is biding his time—after Hitler—is meritorious at an hour when mankind once again is confronted with the old and fateful question: What about Germany?

It has been said, and I think wisely, that the Pan-German idea is a demonstration of the truth that "nothing is so dangerous to the mind as a false absolute, and the false absolute of the Germans is Germany." The Pan-German movement is but a symptom of a general German disease. He who sees the problem this way cannot help feeling that the patent medicines which Mr. Pol prescribes will not cure the sick body of Germany. The elimination of the Pan-German élite, of what Mr. Pol calls the "Nazis behind the Nazis," would mean not more than a partial and even, in many individual cases, a doubtful solution; for who is to define what a "Nazi behind a Nazi" is, if the answer decides over the fate of thousands of individuals?

Here are, briefly, Mr. Pol's recommendations: he prescribes "The Great Purge," "which will affect four hundred to five hundred persons," recruited from Nazis and Pan-Germans. This job must be done, says Mr. Pol, by a full-fledged German revolution which will carry out the purge during the "cooling-off" period between armistice and peace. The "cooling-off" period, according to Mr. Pol, "may prove very hot in Germany."

And with this wisecrack, at the end of the book, the author takes leave from us. The reader, left in the dark, looks in vain for an answer to his anxious questions: What about Germany and her revolution for freedom? What will this revolution be like? Who will kindle its flame and who will deal with the "hidden enemy?" Will it be Berlin, or will it be Washington, London, or Moscow? Mr. Pol's generalities about the Great Purge cannot make us forget that Moscow lies today nearer to the pulse of Berlin than do Washington and London.

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France Under the Occupation

PARIS-UNDERGROUND. By Etta Shiber (in collaboration with Anne and Paul Dupre). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1943. 392 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PERCIVAL R. KNAUTH

THE winter of 1940-41 was a bad winter everywhere in Europe. It was worst of all, perhaps, in France, where a great nation was awakening from the stunning shock of swift defeat only to sink into a slough of hopelessness and deepening despair. The French seemed gripped by a strange apathy, the result unquestionably of the speed with which their world had tottered in the summer days just past. Frenchmen just didn't seem to give a damn anymore.

Yet there were some who did give a damn, even in those desperate days. Nobody knew how yet to translate their feelings into action; there was no one to teach Frenchmen sabotage, no organizations to give their numbers strength and unity. And so there was very little news of French resistance in the early days. But every once in a while one of those few who just refused to sink into the general apathy would succeed in coming to the notice of the outside world—usually through a curt announcement of arrest or execution. Beyond that, one didn't hear much—but with each such announcement France revived, gaining new life, paradoxically, from its new dead or incarcerated patriots; and so the French Underground grew.

One such announcement came to *The New York Times* office in Berlin sometime in that grim winter of 1940-41. This one was unusual because it told of the arrest of two women and, what was more, not Frenchwomen but one American and one British-born. The report, as I remember it, said something about assisting British soldiers. Even if we could have gotten the full story—which we couldn't—it probably would not have amounted to much. Or so I thought at the time.

But the story certainly did amount to something. When Mrs. Etta Shiber, a mild and cultivated American woman of some 60 years, and her friend Mrs. Kitty Beaurepos, British-born and some ten years younger, went to jail the Germans stopped an underground railway which had helped more than 150 British survivors of Dunkirk to freedom. Not even the Germans realized, when they first picked up Mrs. Shiber, what a haul they had made. Not even Mrs. Shiber and her friend realized at the time what a job they were doing. They were just two middle-aged women who got into this Pimpernel role because a British aviator they met outside Paris the day the Germans took over the city happened to resemble Mrs. Shiber's dead brother. And they stayed on the job because they could not bear the thought of Englishmen being hunted down in the woods like animals, because they wanted to save what English lives they could, and because, once started, their underground railway worked with such smooth success that there seemed no real reason to stop it.

How they did it makes a strange and inordinately thrilling story that is really unique among books of this war. Mrs. Shiber and her friend Kitty (who was the real leader of the two) were at first all alone in their project. Then they met an acquaintance who was smuggling Frenchmen across the Unoccupied Zone. They joined forces with him. For a while the two ladies —for all the world like "Arsenic and Old Lace" in reverse—went out and fetched their own men. They rescued two from military hospitals in a way that should give Alfred Hitchcock ideas. And then they really got going.

Through an advertisement they put in the newspaper *Paris Soir* in hopes of getting in touch with more British soldiers they came into contact with a French priest. (The answers they got to the advertisement, their French friends told them, might be Gestapo traps, but the priest's letter, in admirable and innocent-looking double-talk, seemed trustworthy.) This priest lived in a region which was swarming with British soldiers who hadn't been able to get to the beach at Dunkirk. He had several in his parish house, part of which was occupied by the Germans.

What the two ladies had to offer was just what he needed. Their Paris apartment became the way station for a route taking these Englishmen from northern France clear down to the Spanish border or North Africa, four at a time. Since most of them couldn't speak English, they had to have French escorts, provided by the ladies' French friends who were sending countrymen to de Gaulle.

Well, the ladies finally got caught—Mrs. Shiber first, then her friend. The whole ring wound up in jail, was sentenced at last at a trial which is one of the best portraits of the hateful, haughty, inhuman Nazi parody of justice that I have yet seen. Mrs. Shiber, determined not to let the Gestapo get the best of her, stayed one jump ahead of them right up to the trial: she can be proud to the end of her days that she never admitted a thing. Her impulsive, idealistic friend Kitty realized only when the sentence was pronounced—death—what a serious business it was. Whether that sentence was ever carried out Mrs. Shiber does not know; the last she heard of Kitty she had been taken to Germany, months after the trial.

Etta Shiber

The most amazing part of this story is the almost incredible simplicity of their operations. Mrs. Shiber describes herself as a perfectly average person, with no taste for adventure; indeed, during the early part of their underground work she was forever trying to dissuade Kitty from continuing. Kitty, for her part, had a great deal more idealism and impulse than good sense. Yet between them these two women achieved a synthesis of unsuspected cunning that might have kept them going indefinitely but for a drunken Frenchman who either denounced or unwittingly betrayed them. Even when the Gestapo was thus put on the track they still did not know what was going on; but as Mrs. Shiber's questioner said: "When a string of pearls breaks and one of them drops off, the others invariably follow, one after the other"; and so the rest of the ring was gradually discovered.

Mrs. Shiber was in prison from December, 1940, until the middle of April, 1942. Her prison experiences were horrible and do not make light reading. She had little hope of ever getting out alive. She finally was exchanged, however, for a German spy in the U. S., and so got home on the diplomat ship *Drottningholm*.

Here now is her story. It is a thriller, better than any spy fiction because it is true. It is authentic; probably the best picture we have yet had of France under the occupation. And it is a book which should make every American feel proud: that in such a situation an American woman, despite her misgivings, despite her age and her previously sheltered life, could rise to the occasion and help save over 150 English lives for the Allied cause.

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For several months now, the natives of North Africa have learned the difference between an invasion of occupation and an invasion of liberation.

What Tunisia Is Like

I KNOW TUNISIA. By Dahris Martin. New York: Ives Washburn Inc. 1943. 271 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by GISÈLE GRIES KNAUTH

A BOOK about Tunisia, without a single reference to the war, is certainly worthwhile reading just now. "I Know Tunisia" furnishes a background for understanding the task ahead for the Allies in dealing with the natives. This book reads from beginning to end like a novel introducing the reader into a world that existed hundreds of years ago, whose people were friendly but proud, kept faithfully to their old customs and above all to their faith that "God is great. There is no God but God and Mohammed is His Prophet." You find it difficult to realize, however, that these people still believe that the earth is flat, that women are definitely inferior to men and therefore cannot eat at the same table with them, that human beings have to be very careful in their dealings with Djinns, little spirits of which there are good and bad ones, the former having to be thanked and the latter praised so that they will not get angry. And as Kalipha, the hero of the book, explains, death is no calamity. "Life on earth is brief at best . . . The longest life is contemptible in view of eternity. Was it not immaterial then whether we died today or tomorrow?" And "the fate of every man is inscribed on his forehead; all is written, or as we others say, Mektoub."

Kalipha was Miss Martin's friend and guide during the two winters and one summer which she spent in Kairouan. He met her and her friends at the railroad station and clung to them despite their protestations that they had no money and did not want a guide. He introduced them into the life of Kairouan's natives, of which his own immense family represented a large cross-section. He was a "villainous-looking Arab" who had once been a guide for the foreigners coming to Kairouan and whose license was removed by the French authorities after his brother had been involved in some murder. Though Miss Martin could never find out the motive of his special friendliness for her, it made it possible for her to get an intimate view of the Arab way of life, even to learn to eat in the Arab manner with "the thumb and the two first fingers of the right hand," to go to a "fokkarah" or "party for the propitation of some woman's djinn," to a funeral, to various other functions.

Despite its title the book does not give a complete picture of the life in Tunisia, the Arabs being only a part of the large population, with their own language, customs, and religion. Besides them are many others, Jews, Bedouins, and other nomad tribes, all officially under French control and administration but in the main untouched by it, at least insofar as their family life is concerned.

The book does not touch on any political questions but it does reveal the political problems involved in dealing with the people who live in the whole of North Africa where the Allied troops are stationed now. It also makes evident the difficulties that will be encountered in bringing democratic principles near to them.

Hub of History

THE MIDDLE EAST: Crossroads of History. By Eliahu Ben-Horin. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1943. 248 *pp., and index.* $3.

Reviewed by FREDERICK GRUIN

MR. BEN-HORIN, a Russian-born journalist who has sixteen years of travel, study, and reporting in the Middle East under his belt of experience, is convinced that "no other area on earth is so much in need of intelligent understanding by the American and British democracies as the Middle East." Anyone with half an eye on the headlines of the past year and the present hour must nod assent.

The arid, rough, Moslem region between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf is, as Mr. Ben-Horin neatly puts it, a "Grand Central" of the world. The Middle East's intercontinental land routes and waterways, as well as its oil and foodstuffs, have made it one of World War II's grand prizes. In their version of the Hohenzollern "Drang nach Osten," the Nazis unleashed a titanic bid for it. They reached Alamein and Stalingrad, and the prize was almost in their grasp. Then came the great turning-point battles in the Egyptian wasteland and the Volga steppeland; since those defeats, Nazi fortunes have steadily ebbed. Now we see the Middle East serving the United Nations as a springboard leading to the loose back door of Adolf Hitler's Festung.

Mr. Ben-Horin strides into a provocative discussion of the role of the Middle East in World War II, after he has first presented a swift, primer survey of Turkey, the Arab states, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Egypt. He is sure that the Wehrmacht's failure to take the Middle East ranks with the failure to reduce Britain. In each crucial battle a "miracle" saved the Allies. Surprisingly, Mr. Ben-Horin does not believe the Middle East stood in its gravest peril in 1942 when Rommel lunged to Alamein, but rather in 1940 when overcautious Graziani marched into Egypt against a totally unprepared Britain, and again in 1941 when the Nazis seized Crete and sneaked air forces into Syria. Instead of pressing advantage then in the Mediterranean, the Fuehrer struck against Russia; that was the "miracle" that saved the Middle East. Mr. Ben-Horin could go further, for this "miracle" saved much more than the Middle East from Nazi conquest. His contention that the Germans made a fatal mistake in attacking Russia rather than the Middle East overlooks one important point: Would the Red

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Army have stood idly by while the Wehrmacht snatched the Dardanelles, raced across Turkey and Iran, and thereby flanked Russia's whole southern window?

Wisely, Mr. Ben-Horin devotes considerable thought to the coming role of the Middle East. The ingredients are all present to make this crossroads of empire an international cockpit—rival European imperialisms, Arab nationalism, Zionist ambitions. British imperialism, symbolized by the arrogant and superior servants of the Colonial Office, is Mr. Ben Horin's pet irritant. He distrusts the Colonial Office completely and would have none of it in his post-war planning. For British dominance in the Middle East he would substitute a condominium of Western powers. Nor does Mr. Ben-Horin think much of "pan-Arabia" or "pan-Islam." These are "mythical" movements, he maintains. The hard facts about the Arabs are that they are primitive and politically immature; an international condominium must raise their standard of living and prepare them for self-government. A stout pro-Zionist, Mr. Ben-Horin flatly calls British imperialism the betrayer of the Jewish people in their striving for a national home in the Middle East. He is convinced that Israel and Islam can live together in peace—if the Arabs were moved from Palestine and Transjordan, which must become the haven of a Jewish nation of several million.

Mr. Ben-Horin's book is timely, his writing vigorous, his point of view firmly argued. His "condominium" suggestion makes sense. But he leaves questions as well as enlightenment. His sympathies are so strong that one wonders if he does less than justice to Arab aspirations. One would like to see him indulge his zest for speculation in a little essay on the possible repercussions of a powerful, superior Zionist state among the backward, jealous Arab communities. Might there not be Zionist economic and financial imperialism, or Arab-Jewish nationalist wars dragging in all the interested powers? But the questions prove one of Mr. Ben-Horin's major contentions: The world will not be happy if it neglects the problems of the Middle East.

Something for the Stay-at-Homes

THE SKY IS MY WITNESS. By Capt. Thomas Moore, Jr., U.S.M.C. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1943. 135 *pp.* $2.

G. I. JUNGLE. By E. J. Kahn, Jr. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1943. 149 *pp.* $2.

PICK OUT THE BIGGEST. By Frank Morris. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1943. 132 *pp.* $2.

LOVE AT FIRST FLIGHT. By Charles Spalding and Otis Carney. Illustrated by Carl Rose. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1943. 160 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

HERE are four more of those small books that are crowding into print to tell the stay-at-homes what war is like. Captain Moore hoists his readers into the cockpit of his own dive bomber and carries them through the Battle of Midway and the consolidation of the conquest of Guadalcanal. With Private Kahn, infantryman, we sail for Australia, enjoy the hospitality of the land-down-under, and gather impressions of the New Guinea campaign both north and south of the Owen Stanley range. Frank Morris tells the heroic story of the *Boise,* which engaged six enemy warships north of Guadalcanal and earned the right to paint six Japanese flags and six silhouettes—three cruisers and three destroyers—on her forward superstructure. Charles Spalding and Otis Carney, recounting the humorous trials and tribulations of Lester Dowd, Naval Air Cadet, write only for laughs, and abundantly get them. All four books are, in their several ways, readable and worth reading.

The tale of Captain Mike Moran and the men of the *Boise* will take its place in naval history as one of the great chapters in the long chronicle of sea warfare. Mr. Morris has packed his exciting narrative with informing detail, while citing many individual deeds of courage, and he has not shrunk from the horrors that so often companion heroism. The *Boise* struck tremendous blows, but she took such cruel punishment as well that the Admiral thought she must be a ghost ship when, down by the head but "still managing to do a respectable twenty knots," she steamed back into her place in the task force's column.

If "Pick Out the Biggest" is the most stirring volume of this quartet, "The Sky Is My Witness" is the most appealing. Born on the edge of Hell's Kitchen, son of an Irish-American policeman, Tom Moore is a good pilot and a good Catholic, and he writes of both flying and faith with the same simplicity, the same lack of pretension. In a prefatory line he thinks E. Ralph Emmett for his help in the preparation of the book; but any ghosting there may have been done here has been completely successful and unobtrusive. The story comes cleanly from author to reader, with no hint of an intermediary. Capt. Thomas Moore, Jr., United States Marine Corps, is a man to know. And you'll like him.

Readers of *The New Yorker* will greet as old acquaintances most of the chapters that make up "G. I. Jungle." Mr. Kahn writes a pleasant, placid prose that, in view of his subjects, often seems wilfully unexciting. He has a nice sense of humor, dedicated to the smile rather than the laugh. ("General MacArthur had a major general with him, who, though of sufficiently impressive rank to have made a moderate commotion all by himself in normal circumstances, went as unnoticed as a conscientious seal juggling a ball in one circus ring while a man is shot out of a cannon in another.")

Mr. Kahn describes the strange and tough New Guinea campaign from the point of view of a soldier whose duties kept him at a headquarters behind the front lines, where he "tossed around a lot of urgent and tactically significant message slips but no live ammunition." He did not fire his rifle at a Jap, nor was he fired upon. But he was generously bombed, and he saw plenty of action of other kinds north of the Owen Stanley range, so his philosophical detachment must be credited to his temperament rather than to his place in the military scheme. Only once does he come close to raising his voice, and that is in the paragraph where he describes the "men at the front in New Guinea" as "perhaps the most wretched-looked soldiers ever to wear the American uniform." But even then he does not quite raise it, serene in the knowledge that a thing need not be said loudly to be said well.—P.S. Someone should tell Private (now Warrant Officer) Kahn that Dorothy Lamour has never pretended to portray Melanesian maidens. Polynesians are her meat. And he should be told further that it is the Polynesian South Sea isles, not the Southwest Pacific's Papua, that are famous for their "romantic scenery."

"Love At First Flight" is nothing if it is not fun. But you will be well advised to park your sophistication outside its covers and bear in mind that Army and Navy fun is, by and large, young fun.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTICS (No. 495)

E. CURIE:

JOURNEY AMONG WARRIORS

One could already see that, just as the wartime alliance between the United Nations was a highly imperfect one, peace, when it came, would have to be a compromise between vigorous forces that could never be made identical.

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Recollections of the Gas Buggy

Footnotes to An Era for the Future Historian

JAMES THURBER

NOW that the humorous magazines have taken to printing drawings of horses rearing at the sight of an automobile, and of children exclaiming as a car goes by, "What is that thing, Mamma? Mamma, what is that thing, huh, Mamma?", it is perhaps not out of place to prepare some small memorial in advance of the passing of the motor car. It appears to have reached, on its way backward to oblivion, what corresponds roughly to the year 1903.

I think that no one has drawn a darker or more vivid picture of the approaching doom of the gas engine than Mrs. Robertson, the aged colored washerwoman whose prophecies and pronouncements I have the privilege of listening to every Monday morning. Mrs. Robertson is, for my money, an extremely sound woman, although admittedly my judgment of soundness has sometimes been questioned.

Some of the opinions of Mrs. Robertson which I recall offhand are these: "If you don't pay no mind to diseases, they will go away." "The night was made partly for rest and partly as a punishment for the sinful." And "The government only allows you to keep furniture for two months." This last conviction grows out of Mrs. Robertson's habit of buying furniture on the installment plan and failing to keep up her payments longer than six or seven weeks, with the result that the things are repossessed. She looks upon this recurring ritual in her domestic life as a form of federal taxation.

Mrs. Robertson's beliefs and feelings about the future of the automobile (which I have been leading up to) go like this: the oil supplies of the world are being dried up in order to prevent future wars. This will also put an end forever to pleasure driving, but that is all right because, if people kept on riding in cars, they would soon lose the use of both legs, and the life of Man would pass from the earth.

If Mrs. Robertson is right in her predictions, I should like to set down my own few unique experiences with gas-driven vehicles before I forget them. They may possibly serve as footnotes to the work of some future historian, lightening a little the dolorous annals of the automobile.

Let me admit, to begin with, that the automobile and I were never in tune with each other. There was a fundamental incompatibility between us that amounted at times almost to chemical repulsion. I have felt the headlights of an automobile following me the way the eyes of a cat follow the ominous activities of a neighbor's dog. Some of the machines I have owned have seemed to me to bridle slightly when I got under the wheel. Neither the motor car nor myself would greatly mourn if one of us were suddenly extinguished.

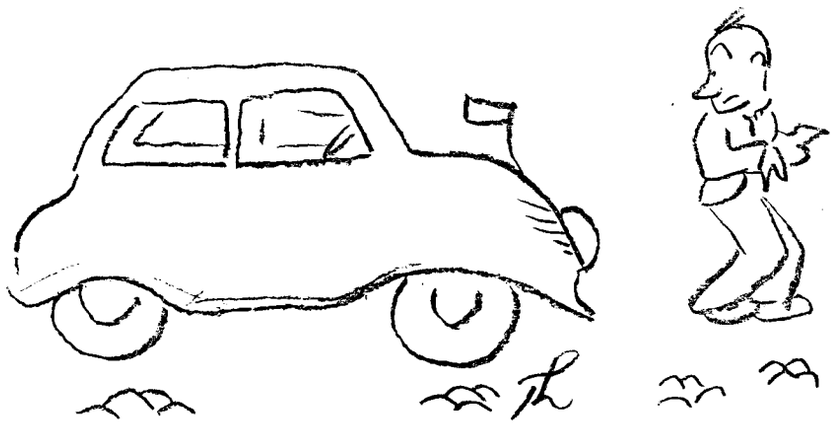
Years ago, an aunt of my father's came to visit us one winter in Columbus, Ohio. She enjoyed the hallucination, among others, that she was able to drive a car. I was riding with her one December day when I discovered, to my horror, that she thought the red and green lights on the traffic signals had been put up by the municipality as a gay and expansive manifestation of the Yuletide spirit. Although we finally reached home safely, I never completely recovered from the adventure, and could not be induced, after that day, to ride in a car on holidays.

When I got an automobile of my own and began to drive it, I brought to the enterprise a magnificent ignorance of the workings of a gas engine, and a profound disinterest in its oily secrets. On several occasions, worried friends of an engineering turn of mind attempted to explain the nature of gas engines to me, but they succeeded only in losing me in a mechanical maze of terminology. I developed the notion that the gas engine was more soundly constructed than I was. I elaborate this point only to show you on what unequal terms the motor car and I were brought together.

Out of my long and dogged bouts with automobiles of various makes, there comes back to me now only one truly pleasurable experience. There may have been others, but I doubt it. I was driving in the British Isles in 1938, and came one day to a sudden, coughing stop in a far and lonely section of Scotland. The car had run out of gas in the wilderness. This car's gasoline gauge had a trick of mounting toward "Full" instead of sinking toward "Empty" when the tank was running low, one of many examples of pure cussedness of which it was capable. There I was, miles from any village, with not even a farmhouse in sight. On my left was a thick woods, out of which the figure of a man suddenly appeared. He asked me what was the matter, and I said I had run out of petrol. "It just happens," he told me, "that I have a can of petrol." With that, he went back into the woods, and came out again with a five-gallon can of gasoline. He put it in the tank for me, I thanked him, paid for it, and drove on.

ONCE when I was telling this true but admittedly remarkable story, at a party in New York, a bright-eyed young woman exclaimed, "But when the man emerged from the lonely woods, miles away from any village, far from the nearest farmhouse, carrying a five-gallon can of gasoline, why didn't you ask him how he happened to be there with it?" I lighted a cigarette. "Madam," I said, "I was afraid he would vanish." She gave a small laugh and moved away from me. Everybody always does.

Another experience I had in England the same year helped to shake the faith of at least one Briton in the much-vaunted Yankee affinity for machinery. The battery of my car had run down in a village about twenty miles from York, my destination. I put in a call to a garage and a young mechanic showed up presently in a wrecking car. He said he would give me a tow for a few yards. I was to let the clutch in and out (or out and in, whichever it is) and start the engine that way. It is a device as old as the automobile itself, and years before I had



"I have felt headlights follow me like the eyes of a cat following the neighbor's dog."

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managed it successfully. Any child or old lady can do it.

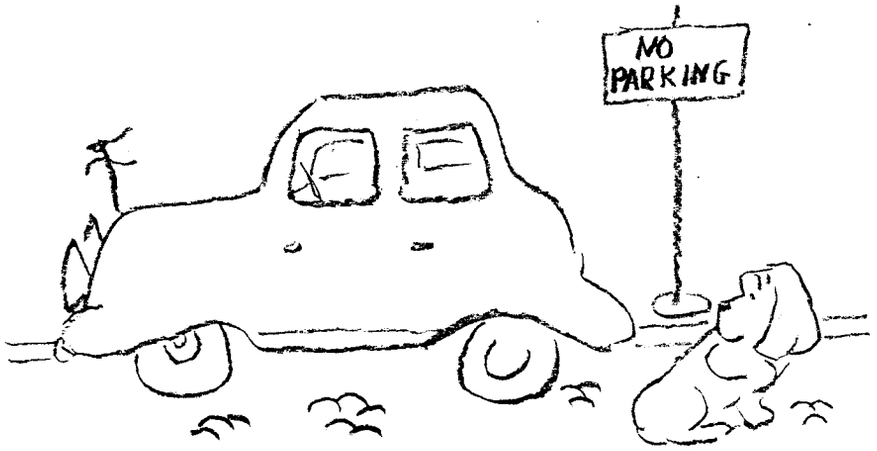
SO he attached a rope to the back of his car and the front of mine, and we were off. I kept letting the clutch out and in (or in and out) madly, but nothing happened. The garage man kept stopping every 500 yards or so and coming back to consult with me. He was profoundly puzzled. It was farther than he had ever dragged a car in his life. We must have gone, in this disheartening manner, about a third of the way to York. Finally he got out for the seventh time and said to me, "What gear have you got her in?" I didn't have her in any gear. I had her in neutral. She had been in neutral all the while.

Now, as any child or old lady knows, you have to have her in gear. If she is in neutral, it is like trying to turn on the electric lights when there are no bulbs in the sockets. The garage mechanic looked at me with the special look garage mechanics reserve for me. It is a mixture of incredulity, bewilderment, and distress. I put her in low gear, he gave me a short haul, and she started. I paid him and, as I drove off, I could see him in the rear-view mirror, standing in the road still staring after me with that look.

After I had got back to America (safe and sound, to the surprise of my friends), I produced this same expression on the face of a garage man in Connecticut one afternoon. I had driven the same car from Newtown to Litchfield on a crisp October day. It happened that I was just getting over an attack of grippe, and still running a temperature of a couple of degrees. The car, out of plain deviltry, began to run one, too. The red fluid in the engine gauge on the dashboard started to rise alarmingly. It got to the point marked "Danger." I drove into a garage in a pretty jumpy state of mind. A garage man looked at the gauge and said the thermostat was clogged or something of the kind. I was standing outside the car, staring at the dashboard and its, to me, complicated dials, when I noticed to my horror that one of them registered 1650. I pointed a shaking finger at it and said to the mechanic, "That dial shouldn't be registering as high as all that, should it?" He gave me the same look I had got from the man in England. "That's your radio dial, Mac," he said. "You got her set at WQXR."

I got into the car and drove home. The garage man stared after me until I was out of sight. He is probably still telling it around.

My temperature rose a degree that night, and I developed a theory about my automobile. The thing possessed, I decided, a certain antic intelligence, akin to that of a six-months-old poodle.



The buggy had the unhappy faculty of backing up into no-parking places.

It had run a temperature that afternoon out of mischief and mockery, because I was running one. It had deliberately betrayed me in the Scottish wilderness that other afternoon, by running its gasoline gauge toward "Full" instead of "Empty." I began to wonder what I had done to the car to arouse its malice. Finally I put my finger on it. The car had probably never forgiven me for an incident that had occurred at the border between Belgium and France one day in 1937.

We had stopped at the Belgium customs on our way into France. A customs man leaned into the car, glanced at the mileage recorded on the speedometer, and said something in French. I thought he said I would have to pay one franc for every kilometer the car had travelled. I was loudly indignant in French and in English. The car had gone about 35,000 miles. I figured this out in kilometers, and it came roughly to 55,000. Changing that figure into francs and then into dollars, still loudly and angrily, I estimated I would have to pay around $1800 to the Belgian customs. The customs man kept trying to get a word in, and so did my wife, but I roared on to my peroration. I shouted that the car had not cost one half of $1800 when it was new, and even then it hadn't been worth a third of that. I announced that I would not pay as much as fifty dollars to drive the car into Oz or Never-Never Land (*Jamais-Jamais Pays*).

The engine, which had been running, stopped. The customs man finally got in a word. Dismissing me as obviously insane, he spoke to my wife. He shouted that he had said nothing about $1,800 or even eight dollars. He had simply made some small comment on the distance the car had gone. As far as he was concerned, we could drive it to *Jamais-Jamais Pays* and stay there. He turned on his heel and stalked away, and I started the motor. It took quite a while. The car was acting up. The night my fever rose, I thought I knew why. It had resented the slighting remarks I made about its value, and had determined to get even with me.

IT got even with me in more ways than I have described. Whenever I tried to put chains on a tire, the car would maliciously wrap them around a rear axle. If I parked it ten feet from a fire plug and went into a store, it would be only five feet from the plug when I came out. If it saw a nail in the road, the car would swerve and pick the nail up. Once, driving into a bleak little town in the Middle West, I said aloud, "I'd hate to be stuck in this place." The car promptly burned out a bearing, and I was stuck there for two days.

If Mrs. Robertson is right in her prophecy, and the gas engine is really on the way out, it will be no dire blow for me. I will move within roller-skating distance of a grocery, a drug-store, a church, a library, and a movie house. If the worst comes to the worst, I could even walk.

Fraser Young's Literary Crypt: No. 14

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. The solution to Crypt No. 14 will be found in the next issue.

JZ CTQN T JCDYB DI YZJCDYB, DO MZE'QN YZJ JCN PCTYPN JZ ICZL DJ, TYU JZ XYZL T JCDYB DI YZJCDYB, EYWNII ZJCNFI XYZL MZE XYZL DJ. WZFU YTYPM.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 13

NOT MANY SOUNDS IN LIFE, AND I INCLUDE ALL URBAN AND ALL RURAL SOUNDS, EXCEED IN INTEREST A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

CHARLES LAMB—
"VALENTINE'S DAY."

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THE NAZI TEACHER AFTER THE WAR

AN interesting little skirmish is developing in educational circles over these questions: What are we going to do with the German school system after the war? What will we do about the textbooks? What will we do about the many thousands of Nazi Party members who have held teaching posts for years?

In answer to which, a fairly sizable body of school men (but hardly a majority, if we are to judge from the recent conferences of educators) is taking a stand for a "liberal" policy. These scholars define a liberal policy as one which takes into account the techniques of democracy in education, as they see it, as well as the essential difference between the totalitarian way and the democratic way in the schools. This, in effect, is how one of the members of the go-slow group describes it:

"The very essence of Nazism, in the classroom and out, is monopolistic control. Totalitarian power fears competition with its very life, and indiscriminately crushes all opposition or what it interprets as opposition. As it concerns the classroom, no teacher is tolerated unless he is either an outright partisan or is demonstrably sympathetic to the regime.

"But that is the Nazi way. That is not the democratic way. If we oust the Nazi teachers, we will be guilty of the very things we are supposed to be fighting against. Are we going to impose our own ideas of what is right and what is wrong? Are we going to set up our own monopoly? Are we going to turn Nazi in order to deal with Nazism?"

On the surface, this sounds convincing enough; and it is easy to understand how such reasoning can attract considerable support both among teachers and the lay public, concerned as all of us are with the problem of adapting democratic techniques to the solution of questions of ever-increasing complexity growing out of the war.

For ourselves, we take sharp issue with the go-slow group. We do not see that their particular arguments, as summarized above, fit the particular case. What they say seems eloquent, and, seemingly, almost elementary in its definition of the points at issue. And yet we cannot avoid the conviction that on any level except pure rhetoric their appeal lacks substance and consistency.

Let us assume for the moment that America will be in a position to dictate the revamping of the German school system. We say "assume" because to date we have by no means taken out an exclusive deed on the property of this war, and we have all we can do to keep up our share of the installments; but, assuming that we *shall* have some say in the matter, we think that the continuation of Nazi teachers in the schools of Germany is both an academic and a primitive question. It is academic in the most literal sense; it is primitive in the same way that the question, "Shall we permit someone to hit us with an axe?" is primitive. What astonishes us more than anything else is the fact that such an argument should even be raised. Certainly let us root the Nazis out of the school system if it is in our power to do so, and let us pray that it *may* be in our power to do so.

Can it be that we do not know that the fundamental issue today is whether we can kill Nazism before it kills us? That this war came about precisely because not enough people realized in time what Nazism really is? And now we are proposing to keep the poison alive, to keep feeding it to the same people and in the same place from whom and from where the contagion started seemingly only yesterday. Forget about the ideologies for the moment. Let's consider memories. Have we forgotten so soon? Have we forgotten what Nazism really is? Or perhaps a better question is whether we ever really knew.

We do not see that the eradication or elimination of Nazism from its breeding ground is undemocratic. We do not see that the abrupt—and it can't be too abrupt to suit us—discontinuation of the services of the Nazi teacher is undemocratic. Apparently there is confusion over that old bugaboo "indoctrination." But the question of indoctrination doesn't enter the picture. It is purely a matter of teaching standards and cultural values. The Nazis have imported into the school system of Germany, as Professor Kilpatrick has pointed out, countless thousands of non-teachers, hacks whose job is to glorify the Fuehrer, impose a regimen of thinking, brutalize the emotions; in short, as Mr. Ziemer tells us, educate for death. We shouldn't let the word "teacher" scare us; these are not teachers but professional killers, and in proposing to keep them in the schools we are proposing to perpetuate a murderous monopoly.

This does not mean that we would prohibit Nazism from being aired in the classroom; there is no reason, in fact, why the subject shouldn't be opened up with some degree of comprehensiveness and penetration. Far from keeping it a secret, the full story must be spread across the blackboards of Germany until it becomes as familiar as the alphabet itself.

As for this business of values—that lame old hypothetical warhorse about "who knows what is right and who knows what is wrong"—we thought all that was settled when we asked millions of Americans to give their lives because there *was* some fundamental belief concerning what was right and what was wrong. We did a handspring in joy when Ralph Barton Perry called his book "Our Side Is Right"—and he did it without blushing! Does any educator contend that there are values in Nazism worth preserving? If so, let him stand and be counted. Does any educator mean to say that moral values are non-existent or non-ascertainable, as though we were dealing with the question of the precise moment when the Leaning Tower at Pisa first began to lean?

There is something more treasonable than timid in saying that there is no way of knowing whether Nazism is right or wrong—treason in the larger sense to the nation and the men who are being killed at this very moment; treason in the more confined sense to education itself. Certain responsibilities education must be able and willing to take, such as the responsibility for being able to identify its mortal enemies.

We suspect that the important question before us as it concerns Nazis in the classrooms of Germany after this war is not whether we are going to keep the rascals in, but, if we get the chance, what we are going to do with them after we kick them out.

N. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Max Reinhardt, the Music-Maker

SIR: The American press has, so far, heroically resisted all attempts on the part of European emigrés to introduce into its columns the European literary custom (or nuisance) of celebrating the fiftieth, sixtieth, etc., birthday of every outstanding writer, artist, or scholar. It may be said, however, in defense of that custom, that such an occasion as an anniversary often provides for an essayist a peg on which to hang some of his favorite ideas on the subject he has long been waiting to utter.

As for Max Reinhardt, the "world showman," the "Austrian hedonist," it might not be a bad idea to use the occasion of his seventieth birthday for a revision of the not entirely truthful portrait engraved in our minds owing to misinterpretation and forgetfulness. The era when he was considered theater's superman was followed by another when his work was besmirched, his importance in the history of the drama and stage underrated, especially by the expressionists who charged him with having abandoned the spiritual element of the theater by catering, indiscriminately, to the senses of the public.

Let us stick to the truth. Reinhardt was neither a Prospero, transforming with his magic wand the stage into an immaculate wonderland, nor Barnum, turning the classic dramas of all nations into working scripts for colossal circus shows. Actually, Reinhardt was a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Simultaneously, he directed the huge Grosses Schauspielhaus, originally a Berlin circus where he "barnumized" the classics, and the tiny Kammerspiele where he presented poetical or highly sophisticated modern plays. Time and again he declared that the intimate theater remained his preference even though, regrettably, the public preferred his sensational circus performances. He was rebuked, almost unanimously, for his tasteless production of "Hamlet in Evening Dress"—but his critics should have praised, at least, his courage in breaking the laws of theatrical orthodoxy in order to discover new continents.

Summing up, it should be stated that, in the decade preceding the First World War, he made the theatre (not the German one only) which, around 1900, had become a two dimensional art, three dimensional again. He freed the stage of the dullness and drabness of the naturalist era, he used painter, musician, skilled mechanic, lighting expert, and ballet master for the creation of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (the joint work of *all* arts), after having coaxed out of his actors their best qualities. On the other hand, he did not, like certain modern, especially Russian, regisseurs, tamper with the text of a play, nor did he consider the actor as raw material for the egotistical use of the producer, as is often done in this country.

Americans who have seen only his intriguing but superficial productions of "The Miracle" and "The Eternal Road," or his questionable film version of "A Midsummernight's Dream," know only his Mr. Hyde nature. Even his performances at the Salzburg Festivals were not free of certain sensational scenic trick effects, as he desired to appeal to the many foreign spectators who, otherwise, might have been bored to death by the lengthy philosophical discussions in "Jedermann," "Das Salzburger Grosse Welttheater," or "Faust."

The genuine artist Reinhardt, the devout servant of the poet, revealed himself primarily in his small theaters. This writer often attended the Theater in der Josefstadt, Vienna's most cultured stage, like Berlin's Kammerspiele, a house resembling, according to Hofmannsthal, "as closely as possible the body of a violin, and, like the violin, attuned to receive and respond to the slightest vibration," where Reinhardt tried to gain, not only the senses, but also the heart of the public with the undiluted music of his art. Directing now a dramatic workshop at Hollywood, the septuagenarian is able to tell his American pupils about the heyday of Austrian culture when the theater was neither a complacent pastime nor a flourishing industry, but an animating center around which all intellectual life revolved.

ALFRED WERNER.

New York, N. Y.

"Do you mean how do *I* like it, or how will the common man like it?"

It Happens All the Time

SIR: At one time, not so long ago, I worked in a rather large bookshop. From time to time, situations would arise which seemed almost too precious to forego recording. One of them follows:

"Oh, Miss," a squeaky voice demanded, "I would like to see some books in blue and white, rather small."

"Does the author matter, Madam?" I asked.

"Oh, no," she retorted, "I don't care what kind they are or who wrote them. I just want them to fit in with the colors of my bedroom."

Screwing up my lips to keep some indelicate aspersions from escaping, I led the lady to a stack of small blue leather-bound English classics. Then, inarticulately apologizing to Thackeray, Fielding, and George Eliot, I asked her if they would do. She examined one of the books as one appraises a piece of furniture.

"These won't do," she said, quite annoyed, "they are only blue, and I don't care for the gilt-edges. They wouldn't fit in at all. Aren't there any others in blue and white?"

She was insistent.

"No," I replied, "books aren't usually published to conform with the colors of rooms."

She glared at me.

"Insolent," she snapped, as she turned vehemently, and marched out.

CELIA MICHAEL SUMMER.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

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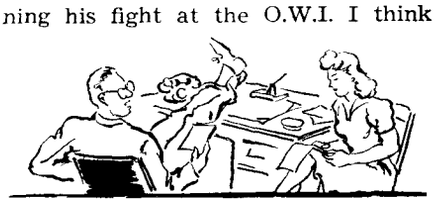
TRADE Winds

THE MOST concentrated scorn and contempt for foreign correspondents and news analysts are displayed by those military nabobs, resplendent in shiny new Brooks Brothers uniforms, who, until so few weeks ago, were foreign correspondents and news analysts themselves. I sat with one of the greatest of them at "21" the other evening, and listened in amazement while he damned writers for shooting off their mouths when they really didn't know what was going on in the world. "But, Archie" (that is not his name), I expostulated, "less than two months ago we published a book by you that did that very thing!" "Two months is a lifetime in this man's war," he said in a very superior manner. "By the way, how is the fool thing selling?" . . . "It seems to me," I said, "that we are arguing in a vicious circle. First you say that civilians have no right to criticize unless they know the facts. Second you defend the policy of not telling civilians the facts. In other words, the man out of uniform is to keep his mouth shut, and take it for granted that his leaders are making no mistakes, are above criticism, and are the best possible men for their jobs in every instance. Hell, man, that's not democracy; that's fascism. That's exactly what Goebbels has been telling Nazi dupes for the past ten years!" "Maybe we could loosen up a little bit," conceded Archie. "I think Elmer Davis is winning his fight at the O.W.I. I think



the President has persuaded Army and Navy public relations officers to let Elmer release big news stories a little faster from now on." . . . If this is true, we may yet enjoy the thrill of hearing an important news flash from our own sources before the Axis bleats its own version of the affair over the short-wave radio. . . .

MY REFORMED correspondent brought back from England the theory that Hitler had lost the war by the commission of three of the greatest military blunders of all time. Two, of course, everybody realizes. One was his failure to invade England after Dunkirk, when the British Army was reeling on the ropes, and had practically no heavy equipment with which to challenge a full-scale invasion effectively. The other was his attack on Russia. He underestimated the Red Army even more grievously than did our own braying isolationist orators and brasshats. Hitler's third fatal mistake, according to Whitehall strategists, was made before the other two. . . . When Russia invaded Finland in 1938, a wave of sympathy for the sadly outmatched Finns swept the rest of the world. Subsequent events proved that Stalin, the unsentimental realist, knew what he was doing when he sought to put as much territory between the Nazis and the city of Leningrad as possible, and when he recognized in Mannerheim a mortal enemy who would join the Nazis in attacking him if he did not move first.

Then, however, you will remember the uproar on behalf of Finland all over America. Benefits were arranged. The Finnish Minister Procope was the hero of Washington. Similar reactions were observed in England and France, and it is extremely likely that at least a token force of British and French soldiers would have been sent to help the Finns if Adolf Hitler had not intervened. He screamed that not one English or French soldier would be tolerated in Finland, and that he would hold Sweden accountable if any foreign troops crossed its soil on the way to the Finnish front . . . He had his temporary triumph, but unwittingly had made a terrible mistake. Had a single English or French soldier gone into battle against the Russians in 1938, a breach would have been opened that all the belated diplomacy in the world might never have healed. "Look how tough it is even without that," pointed out Archie . . . "In short," he summarized, "Hitler has swung like a gate three times and missed. Three strikes is out in this man's league. I might write a piece about it." "I thought you were through with writing for the duration?" Archie bit his lip. "Your words won't be lost," I consoled him (?). "I'll write them up for Trade Winds!" . . .

MOSTLY ABOUT BROADWAY . . . Anita Loos, lost to Hollywood ever since she wrote "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" eighteen years ago, has written a play in collaboration with Lionel Barrymore. It's called "Old Buddha," and Lionel's kid sister, Ethel, is going to star in it. . . . Billy Rose is trying to rescue the Ziegfeld Theatre, on 54th Street and Sixth Avenue, from the clutches of the cinema, and hopes to reopen it as a "legit" house, come Michaelmas, whenever that is. The Ziegfeld was the theatre that housed the original production of "Show Boat," one of the greatest musical plays ever presented in America . . . The once priceless tag, "Ziegfeld Follies," is now pinned on the cheapest, most vulgar, and utterly humorless revue I ever have seen on Broadway . . . You will have a wonderful time at the revival of "The Merry Widow," well sung and produced decently enough, with fine dancing under the direction of Balanchine, and neat

comedy by Melville Cooper. I've liked this fellow Cooper ever since he appeared as the banana-consuming good-for-nothing in "Laburnum Grove." That was the Priestley play in which an old shnook, played for a soft touch by his entire family, turned out to be the head of the biggest forgery ring in Europe . . . If it is still playing when this column appears (not entirely likely, to judge by the size of the audience the evening I saw it) you might enjoy "Murder Without Crime," one of those psychological thrillers from England, with Henry Daniell, the unforgettable Lord Ivor Cream of "Serena Blandish" and the villain of "Kind Lady," indulging in more sadistic exercises . . . Patrick Hamilton, author of "Angel Street" and "Hangover Square," once wrote a play not unlike "Murder Without Crime" that he called "Rope's End." In it, a killer, unexpectedly interrupted in his gruesome business, hid the corpse in an old ottoman, and then sat on top of it to eat a hearty meal. Along about the salad course, his lines called for him to say that he felt sick. "That's what comes from eating on an empty stomach," mumbled Robert Benchley at the opening performance. . . .

LOUIS MacNEICE, one of the leading members of the Spender-Auden school of younger English poets, learned enough about Americans and their ways in the year that he taught at Cornell to author a knowing and expert tome called "Meet the U. S. Army." It is published by the British Government, and is selling like hotcakes to the good but slightly puzzled citizens of the United Kingdom. . . . William Faulkner has been so busy toiling for the Brothers Warner for the past year that his new novel has progressed slowly, if at all. He, along with a dozen other top writers, was

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"I can understand the man-power shortage. . . . But gee whiz. . . . !"

assigned to a super-colossal epic called "Battle Cry." Now reports have it that the entire project is about to be junked. War pictures have not been faring too well at the box-office. Publishers with contracts for countless new war books on their hands are taking note—and paring down first printings. . . .

LOUIS SOBOL tells the story of the Hollywood actor who achieved something of a record for speedy promotions in the Nazi military machine. In successive pictures, he portrayed the role of Nazi private, sergeant, major, and colonel. They were just about to make him a field marshal when a communication from Washington was placed in his hands. A week later he was a buck private in the American Army . . . Bill Saroyan is now a PFC, thereby outranking Charles Addams, the cartoonist, stationed at the same post . . . A colonel reports that he took his wife up in an AT-6 (a training plane). All went well until he prepared to bring the ship in. In an AT-6 a warning horn blows if your wheels are still up when you pull the throttle back to land. The Colonel's wife heard the horn blow, picked up the mike and shouted, "Pull over, John. Someone's trying to pass us!" . . .

CARL GLICK, in his amusing reminiscences of New York's Chinatown, "Three Times I Bow" (Whittlesey House), declares that, when a Chinese gets drunk, his disordered thoughts usually turn to the composition of poetry and maxims. Collections of such literature usually are called something like "The Wisdom of the Far East." A better title, thinks Mr. Glick, would be "Morning-After Repentances of Bad Chinese Poets." . . . Glick's friend Kung ran into difficulties when he married a lovely Westernized Chinese girl who had made an elaborate study of "The Book of Etiquette." The girls Kung had known previously obeyed the counsels of Confucius. "The Book of Etiquette" had an entirely different set of rules. What to do, what to do? Carl Glick admitted he was not equal to the situation. "Against a combination of Emily Post and Confucius I am helpless," he commented. . . .

CAROLE LANDIS, who toured Army camps in England and North Africa to entertain the boys, along with Kay Francis, Mitzi Mayfair, and Martha Raye, is writing a book about her experiences. Queen Elizabeth, she reports, practically fell into the aisle laughing at a little poem that went: "Johnny Skunk was feeling mighty blue; He went to church and sat in somebody else's pew!" . . . Marc Connelly and a companion attended a showing of the dubious screen version of "Assignment in Brittany." Marc tried to keep his friend from walking out in the middle of the picture. "Believe it or not," he whispered gravely. "This picture is based on an actual movie!" . . . Washington continues so overcrowded, I am informed, that six hermits just clubbed together and signed a lease for a two-room apartment . . . Jesse Lasky's next picture will be a life of James Audubon, with Errol Flynn slated to play the noted bird fancier. "Audubon," enthused Lasky, "often pursued a specimen for weeks." "You sure picked the right man to play him," said a friend.

BENNETT CERF.

The man who coined the phrase

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Accent on People

AMERICAN COUNTERPOINT. By Alexander Alland. Introduction by Pearl Buck. New York: The John Day Co. 1943. 158 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

WE have long been taught that America is a country of immigrants, that all of its citizens, including the descendants of the aboriginal Indian, are the offspring of ancestors who journeyed here from foreign shores. This basic historical fact has been and continues to be the source of much that is fine in American history, also of much that is troublesome and harsh. Alexander Alland, the Russian-born photographer, has prepared a number of pictures in which he has tried "to show clearly and distinctly the differences and similarity among Americans of many national and racial backgrounds; differences in their physical appearance, customs, and cultural backgrounds; similarity in the desire for happiness, prosperity, and liberty that we all hold as an American ideal."

Mr. Alland feels intensely the need for racial and national tolerance among Americans, and it is a tribute to his faith in the unity of the various American stocks that he has assembled this collection of pictures. There is a preface by Pearl Buck, whose passionate belief in equality has made her one of the great missionaries of tolerance in our times. Miss Buck believes that "America is not a nation, not a people, America is an idea." And the idea which is America is "that persons of many kinds can live together on a piece of the earth's surface, under a piece of the same sky, and if they believe in freedom they can become a united people." Both she and Mr. Alland deny that America is a melting pot. They cherish differences that America may benefit from them, and so they dislike the suggestion of sameness that came to be implied in Israel Zangwill's famous phrase.

Mr. Alland leans towards understatement, which is an effective relief from the stridency with which social problems are frequently presented. But the succession of group portraits of members of the hyphenated American groups sitting quietly in their homes, churches, or schools, though it emphasizes the similarity of American attitudes, does become monotonous. One wonders where are the more dramatic aspects of American life—where are the miners, the women in poke bonnets—the river men, and the cowboys? Where is the Swedish farmer of Minnesota, the Portuguese fisherman of Cape Cod, the Mexican fruitpicker of California? Or that varied host of workers who have built America and whose virile pride and surging power can be heard in the voice of a Paul Robeson singing his "Ballad for Americans?"

Mr. Alland has sacrificed background and drama in order to emphasize people. Most of his pictures are interiors—American interiors, dull and insipid with their radios and overstuffed chairs, dreadful symbols of caution and standardization. His people seem to be all city people, which is to be expected in an urban land like ours, but it is too bad to leave out that great minority of rural families who were in the majority during most of America's history, and whose way of life is an essential part of the picture of America.

Many of the faces are fine and the character study first-rate. Here artistic understatement is used to advantage, in interesting contrast to the deeply-etched portraits of Americans, the rugged faces and figures found in "You Have Seen Their Faces." The East Indian, pleading for the Orientals who cannot become citizens, the Albanian-American who reads intensely the terrible news from his old country, the Haitiian mother listening to her husband read aloud from "The Merchant of Venice," the Chinese editor preparing manuscripts, are only a few of the instances when Alland's camera has caught the inner spirit as well as the outer form. The gypsy woman bathing her child has the poignant appeal of a lovely madonna. Mr. Alland has done well by the healthy American children in his photographs, taking good advantage of them as attractive objects, but avoiding the sticky sentimentality of less competent photographers.

This compilation is the work of an American, himself of foreign birth, who has great affection for his countrymen, enormous faith in their capacities, and sadness for them when they are hurt by prejudice and intolerance. It lacks the individualized and the immediate approach to the problems of the immigrant and it is in a minor key as photography. However, it does supplement and bring up-to-date the observations of and the hopes for America expressed a generation ago by other foreign-born Americans like Edward Bok, Michael Pupin, Mary Austin, and Jacob Riis.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

ELOPERS IN LITERATURE

Briefly described below are some famous elopements from the pages of literature. How many of them do you remember? Allowing 5 points if you can identify either of the persons concerned in each, and another 5 if you can recall either the title of the story or the author who wrote it, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 20.

1. Before running off with her Christian lover, this beautiful Jewess helped herself to a liberal supply of her father's money and jewels.

2. This clergyman's daughter was kidnaped without much resistance by a noble suitor who went through what he thought was a mock marriage ceremony, only to find out later that it was legal.

3. Pursued by her angry father, this runaway girl and her Highland chieftain were compelled to cross a storm-lashed lake and were drowned before his eyes.

4. This bold lover crept into his enemy's castle, wooed and won the daughter of the house, and fled away with her into a January storm.

5. While dancing with the bride at a wedding reception, this gallant maneuvered her toward the door, swung her up onto his horse, and dashed away with her.

6. Her father and her three brothers were killed in the feud that flared up when this Southern belle eloped with a son of the rival family.

7. Despite his family's disapproval, this soldier eloped with the penniless girl to whom he had been betrothed since childhood, whereupon his father obliterated his name from the family Bible.

8. Her parents and four sisters were considerably upset when this frivolous girl ran off to London with a militia officer, but felt a little better when the elopers were married a few days later.

9. On the eve of her wedding to her cousin, she yielded to the blandishments of a wealthy aristocrat and ran off with him, only to have him suggest some months later that she marry his valet.

10. The daughter of a highly respectable draper, she eloped to Paris with a traveling salesman who had inherited £12,000.

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JOHN GOETTE

travelled twenty thousand miles with the Japanese Army in China, as the accredited representative of the International News Service. He knows the military and political leaders who planned the conquest and who run the conquered provinces. He knows the Japanese technique in war and occupation. His book is the inside story of Japan's attempt to conquer Asia. It is a book that takes the exact measure of our Japanese enemy.

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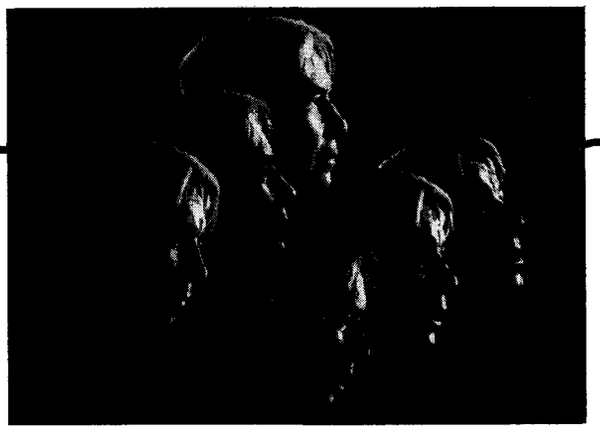

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Going Fishing

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THE CRITIC BEHIND BARBED WIRE

(*Continued from page* 4)

also the simple story of now in, now out; its course is governed by obscure forces but also by such obvious tendencies as that of men to get fed up with anything.

Above all, the critic should admit the possibility of different interpretations of a given work; for just this possibility distinguishes the meanings of art from the meanings of science. Implicit in Croce's doctrine of creative criticism is the assumption that the work of art is static, self-contained, intact, having an objective meaning that can be literally recovered once and for all. Similarly Arnold believed that the aim of criticism is "to see the object as in itself it really is," and then to give the "real" estimate of its worth, not the fallacious historical or personal estimate. Most critics have explicitly adopted this assumption, and all, I suppose, at some time write as if they have. They naturally try to discover the whole intention of the artist, the whole meaning of his work. Yet they cannot possibly do so. The text is inseparable from a context, and to read it "literally" is beyond the powers of the most imaginative. Men are always building better than they know, or worse; the artist himself does not know all he intended, much less just what he achieved, still less what it will mean to a later age or a different society. Multiple meaning is the very sign of imaginative creation, multivalence the very test of value. In short, any critic worth his salt will attempt to get at the "true" meaning of "Hamlet." No critic, save one of colossal conceit, can pretend that he has succeeded. If we could recover exactly what Shakespeare had in mind, we would doubtless have something splendid, superior to the experience of any one reader; but it would still be something less than the whole import and value of "Hamlet," which has also been created by countless appreciative readers in ways Shakespeare could not have foretold.

Hence the critic must also reconsider the whole problem of judgment. By long tradition, his chief duty is not merely to exercise judgment but to act as the official judge; he seldom appears unhappier than when he is not sure what verdict to hand down. He is also notoriously apt to be a hanging judge; and here is the obvious mischief. But the worst mischief goes far beyond all the stupid or brutal verdicts, the injustices done to the most original writers. It lies in the impoverishment of our actual experience in literature, the "trained incapacity" to appreciate or even to recognize the rich possibilities of meaning and value. Although the dogmatic critic's judgment may falsify his experience, it is usually consistent enough with both his perceptions and his principles; his whole response has been narrowed and blunted from the outset. Hence he demands, specifically, that the writer have the true philosophy, express the right ideas and ideals; whereas the chief source of value in literature is its power to transcend any one philosophy, to suggest or support other ideas and ideals—to nourish all ideation and idealism. In this aspect, the chief proof of its vitality is that it has survived centuries of criticism.

YET substitute for "judgment" the broader, gentler term "evaluation," and it is indeed the proper business of criticism. It naturally enters esthetic experience, as it does all perception; it is the natural culmination of enjoyment as well as repulsion; it is the immediate link between art and daily life, which is an endless assertion of choice. Even in the narrower, harsher sense, judgment remains an obligation. If the critic assumes that art is a vital need and a positive force, he must look to the satisfaction of this need, face the consequences of this force. For the practical consequences of bad art are serious enough. In its lowest forms—soap operas, true confessions, comic strips, success stories, Hollywood romances—it can condition a whole citizenry to immature, unrealistic, crude behavior. A decadent or snob art can have comparable effects upon sophisticates.

All this leaves the critic somewhere in the middle, between the extremes of an irresponsible exercise of sensibility and a rigorous administration of law. My thesis is that here he will have not only plenty of room to move around in but solid enough ground to take a stand on. As self-consciousness is the beginning of escape from the limitations of self, so can he achieve more real command and control by a full awareness of the personal, cultural, temporal factors that condition his thought; thought that pretends to utter objectivity and utter freedom is to that very extent blindly limited and determined. In general, practical activity again gives the lead to good sense. The common man is not troubled by the familiar fact that an object has a different appearance when viewed from different positions. He does not establish its "real" appearance by abolishing perspectives, getting a God's-eye view. He is content to know why it looks different in different perspectives, to realize that any view is partial, and to change his position if he wants another view. No more should the critic be troubled by the thought that all approaches to literature are perspectives, and that every insight is also an oversight. To see and estimate the object as it really is, is to see it in its social context, not in itself, and to see it with many eyes in many perspectives, not from nobody's point of view. The critic needs to go *through*, not around, the multiple possibilities. For, if he can ever cut through the barbed wire of his calling, there is no telling how far he can go.

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Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes
Which starlike sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud that you can see
All hearts your captives, yours yet free;
Be you not proud of that rich hair
Which wantons with the lovesick air;
Whenas that ruby which you wear
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone
When all your world of beauty's gone.

Beauty Is Everlasting

I think that I shall never view
A loveliness outlasting you.
For skies are only blue by day,
To melt in night and clouds away;
And stars but scintillate at night,
Moons radiant are with borrowed light;
And roses blush but once and die,
Song ends, then voices rasp so dry;
Tree and rock are Nature's dress,
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That flashes on through Time and Space,
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Books for Young People

MARY GOULD DAVIS

EDITOR'S NOTE: With this issue, Mary Gould Davis becomes editor of Young People's Books for SRL, and will contribute a monthly column, in addition to editing SRL's annual children's book supplement.

RUFUS M. By Eleanor Estes. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1943. 320 *pp.* $2.

IT is good to know that the Moffats of Cranbury, Connecticut, have found their way across the Atlantic. English boys and girls will find in their hard times and good times, in their humor and zest for living a characteristic American home and family. The story is the saga of Rufus M., the youngest member of the family who was hardly more than a baby in the first book. He is now an independent and individual little boy. Rufus M. has that priceless gift—imagination. Adventure lies in wait for him at home and in school, at the public library, in the shops and just around almost any corner of the street. Stooping down, at dusk, to peer into an apparently empty sewer pipe waiting to be laid, he sees two green eyes staring at him. Rufus M. decides that a fox, or perhaps a tiger, is lurking there. Even Jane, the practical Moffat, fails to move him.

> "It can't be a *wild* animal," says Jane firmly. "Not in *Cranbury.*"
> "Jane," the exasperated Rufus answers, "don't say *can't.* You never can be sure. *One* animal could have gotten away from *somewhere.*"

Most of the children who read this will agree with Rufus. Isn't one of their favorite books the story of a lion who *did* get away from a circus and was met by Andy on his way to school? Obviously, Rufus M. is going to grow up to be a different Moffat. Not the familiar path for him, but the path that twists and turns and leads him in the end to something strange and beautiful that is all his own.

A number of things happen in this book to the Moffat family. Sylvia gets herself engaged to a young minister whose overshoes have stood on the front porch at frequent intervals for a long period of time. Jane does not entirely approve of this, but her mother's understanding and good sense come to the rescue. The war touches the Moffats. We leave Jane mixing orange coloring with the margarine to make it look like butter! But "better times are coming." As a family and as individuals they will help to straighten out the world that follows peace. This

—Drawing by Louis Slobodkin, from "Rufus M."

book, like the others, is effectively illustrated by Louis Slobodkin.

THESE HAPPY GOLDEN YEARS. By Laura Ingalls Wilder. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1943. 299 *pp.* $2.

THIS last of the "Little House" stories came out too late for the "high tide" of the Fall books last year, too late for consideration for the 1942 Newbery Medal. It won a medal of its own on the Pacific Coast, however, and if the boys and girls who have followed Laura's adventures since her first appearance in 1932 had their say it would win every prize offered

This is a thoroughly satisfying close to Laura's childhood and girlhood. There is a small town on the prairie now, and Laura has won her certificate to teach in the district school. She is only sixteen. She has earned independence in the hard way. Money must be found for Mary's training in the college for the blind. So Laura packs her bag and starts out for the lonely, bleak schoolhouse, miles away from the home that is the centre of her life. We feel with her the strangeness, the cold, and discomfort of the schoolroom and the house where she is quartered. How exciting it is when, on a mid-winter day, Almanzo dashes up in his sleigh behind fast horses and, tucking her firmly in beside him, drives her home! Here is romance—the true romance. The engagement ring is slipped on her finger, and she begins to work on her trousseau. The fact that she can *have* a trousseau, modest though it is, will be a great relief to the girls who have followed her story! In the end the wedding cake is eaten, the goodbys said, and Almanzo and Laura drive away to begin a life of their own in another "little house." There is in these books about Laura and her people the freshness and vigor of pioneer America, of the days when

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●

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—From the book, "Oswald's Pet Dragon." Drawing by Kurt Wiese.

there was land to claim beyond the Mississippi. They have a high place in fictionalized United States history.

IN AND OUT. Verses by Tom Robinson. Pictures by Marguerite de Angeli. New York: The Viking Press. 1943. 140 *pp.* $2.50.

TOM ROBINSON, of "Buttons" fame, has written a group of poems that appear in a slim, attractive volume with delightful drawings by Marguerite de Angeli. Both poems and pictures tell of things that are familiar to the children who live in the country. The city child will think of them rather wistfully as part of the joys of the summer holiday. Here are trees and birds and flowers, friendly animals, waves on a sandy beach, stars and moonlight. The thoughts about these things, the word pictures are those that come naturally to the minds of imaginative boys and girls. Their recognition of them will be immediate, the singing words will seem familiar, although they themselves may lack the poet's gift of finding them. Many of us have felt this about the sounds that the wind makes in different trees:

The poplars quiver,
The aspens shiver,
The birches sway and swing.
Beeches and maples, standing strong,
Tremble a little and sing.
A soft-toned song.
Balsam and firm and larch
Sing low in a steady march.
The pine alone
Has a deep strong moan.

In some of the poems there is a touch of humor that is reflected in the rhythm of the words. "Kimbottle Brooks and Our Donkey" has this quality. This reviewer knows a group of little Negro girls who meet every week in a branch library in Harlem to listen to poems read aloud and to read them to one another. They will have a good time with "In and Out."

The Phoenix Nest

Wolf

THE old wolf lies with his nose on his paws
Far off on a dreambound hill.
He blinks an eye over man-made laws,
And snuffs the air for the kill.

Running at night, running at night,
With the wind-in-the-wood's caress,
With the moon day-bright on the rock-torn height
Like a queen in her wedding dress.

Not his with the pack to howl and gloat,
With the kept curs whine and bark;
There is salt on his tongue and fire in his throat
For his mate who runs in the dark.

Running at night, running at night,
With the long swift lope of ease,
Springy tendons, pads feather-light,
And her form that flits through the trees.

Burdocked his fell and his red eye dim
And his muzzle grizzled and grey,
But the stars of heaven crowd down on him
Though a million miles away.

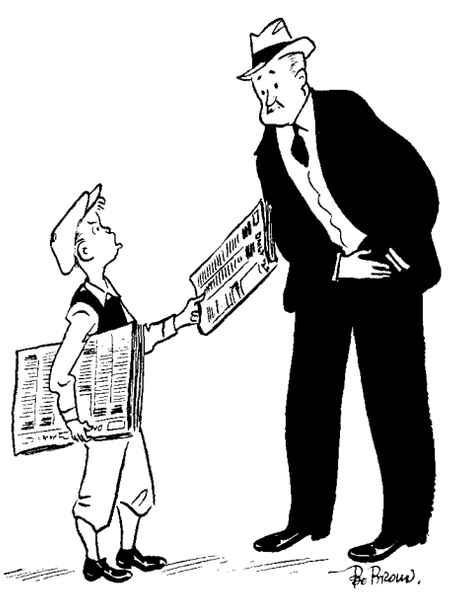
Running at night, running at night,
With the first wild rush of youth,
With the moon in flight, with the stars in flight,
So close on the heels of truth.

The old wolf grunts his scorn of the pack.
Though cold be close to the bone;
Who climbed the track that would not turn back,
Who halts on the rock alone.

Running at night, running at night,
Past mortal thought and breath:
Beast with a God just beyond his sight
To track through the mist of death!

Argosy

Popular Publications, Inc., claims that *Argosy* is the oldest of America's fiction periodicals. It has just come forth revived, in a new dress, beginning with a September issue. It was started in 1882 by the late Frank A. Munsey and became the foundation of the vast fortune left by that, to say the least, eccentric publisher. At times it merged with various other titles owned by Munsey and "drew much life-blood" from its companion magazine *All-Story Weekly*. Some of the writers who wrote for it in its palmy days were Mary Roberts Rinehart, Octavus Roy Cohen, Carolyn Wells, Elmer Davis, P. G. Wodehouse, Max Brand, Isabel Ostrander, and, of all people, John Buchan. The new size *Argosy* at twenty-five cents is a good deal larger than the fifteen-cent magazine I used to know. Now there's smooth, instead of pulp, paper, and drawings in color illustrate the stories. Rogers Terrill is the new editor of *Argosy* and I wish him a stimulating future. I thank him for sending me a copy of the first page of the first original *Argosy*, of December 9, 1882. Then it bore the subtitle "Freighted with Treasures for Boys and Girls," and its full title was *Golden Argosy*. It was published by Rideout & Co. on Barclay Street, It opened with "Do and Dare, or a Brave Boy's Fight for Fortune," by Horatio Alger, Jr., back in those days of real free enterprise and no mammoth corporations. "Tom Tripp worked early and late for a dollar and a half per week, without board, for a hard and suspicious taskmaster



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ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Jessica and Lorenzo, in "The Merchant of Venice," by W. Shakespeare.
2. Olivia Primrose and Mr. Thornhill, in "The Vicar of Wakefield," by Oliver Goldsmith.
3. Lord Ullin's daughter and the chief of Ulva's isle, in "Lord Ullin's Daughter," by Thomas Campbell.
4. Porphyro and Madeline, in "The Eve of St. Agnes," by John Keats.
5. Lochinvar and Ellen Netherby, in "Lochinvar," by Sir Walter Scott.
6. Sophia Grangerford and Harney Shepherdson, in "Huckleberry Finn," by Mark Twain.
7. George Osborne and Amelia Sedley, in "Vanity Fair," by William M. Thackeray.
8. Lydia Bennet and Mr. Wickham, in "Pride and Prejudice," by Jane Austen.
9. Little Emily and James Steerforth, in "David Copperfield," by Charles Dickens.
10. Sophia Baines and Gerald Scales, in "Old Wives' Tale," by Arnold Bennett.

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who was continually finding fault with him. But for sheer necessity he would have left Mr. Graham's store long ago." Tut, tut, Mr. Alger, don't you know that those were the rare old, fair old golden days!

Cat, Dog, and Pun

Beatrice S. Firestone of Cincinnati, Ohio, remembers J. G. Francis and his "Cheerful Cats." In her family many of the lines became family sayings. She also recalls "Chip's" drawings, one in particular being a picture of a very small dog turning back to look at a tail which was extremely short, the sidesplitting line under the sketch being "A Poor Finish." Which reminds me that the other day in Goodspeed's in Boston I saw no less than two copies of an old book of humor we wore to pieces in our house in my youth, called "Puniana." The first two syllables are not, by the way, pronounced "Puny." It contained some of the worst puns in the world, and how we loved it. It was always asking you the difference between something and something else, as, between a thunderstorm and a crying child: "One pours with rain and the other roars with pain." We went into stitches over such things at that age. As I remember, "Puniana" was illustrated by quite horrible little drawings, which we also loved. The "we" is not editorial; it means self and sister.

I thank Elizabeth La Dow of "Larkland," California, for the following nugget:

RHYME AND REASON

Men of power and action hold the
center of the stage,
While men of vision perish, or in dia-
lectic rage
Denounce inhuman triumphs of a me-
chanistic age;
Or find solace in the triumphs of poet,
saint, or sage.

Here's to Good Old Yale!

To Mrs. Hendee Rice of Hartford, Connecticut, I am indebted for a nostalgic letter with reference to a piece I printed last Spring called "My Salad Days."

> Oh! but my middle name is Nostalgia! (And not such a bad name either!) The old New Haven, yes, indeed! I remember "The Queen of the White Slaves" and "The King of the Opium-Ring"—and the tool of the villain was always named Charley. Did you ever notice that? And the villain forced him to his awful bidding by pressing on a spot behind his ear. And the "Hype"! You were a Freshman in 1904. My memories antedate yours, then, since my class was 1902—at least I knew almost everyone in it. Maude Adams in "The Little Minister" deciding which hat to wear, and saying, "But blue was always my color!" and the six front rows yelling, "Yay—ay—ay—ay!" "The Wizard of Oz" and Anna McLaughlin coming out "in front" for her song in tights with one white leg and one black, and my dignified father clapping like mad and then trying to slide down far enough to hide his embarrassment. "Mory's" you don't mention. Did you ever hear Brian Hooker's song to be sung to "The Sheltering Palm" from "Floradora"?
>
> "Oh Louis Linder,
> Lord of the foaming stein,
> *Bring* me a high-ball,
> Bring me a check to sign!
> I sigh for a garden-hose.
> Henry's too slow by far.
> And I'm waiting for thee
> Where the booze flows free
> At the Si-ign of Temple Bar!"
>
> That was when the motto of the upper-classmen was "Chase but not Gowdy." I don't know who said that first—but it was dear Bradley Welch who gave the motto of New Haven as "Honi Soit qui Malley-Neeley!" Thank you a thousand times for recalling happier days.

I'm glad to learn the Hooker song. Brian Hooker has been credited with some of the best ribald Yale songs of his time, or any other. And he was to live to write that classical opera, "Mona!" Mrs. Rice's letter brings up from limbo a memory of drawings by a man named Putnam, before my time, but an old *Record* man. He always signed himself "T. Put." I think it was he who appended this verse to a drawing of a very wobbly-looking calf:

This is a picture of a calf.
It was not made to make you laugh.
It is not funny. Oh dear no!
But it is sort of foolish though.
Yes? No?

Such is immortality! Little did Mr. Putnam dream that his verse would stick in the memory of one old *Recorder* lo, these many years!

Duty and Duties

I remarked something lately about duty being a grim word to Americans, and my old correspondent (not in age) Franklin Wentworth of Redondo Beach, California, sends me the following anecdote anent:

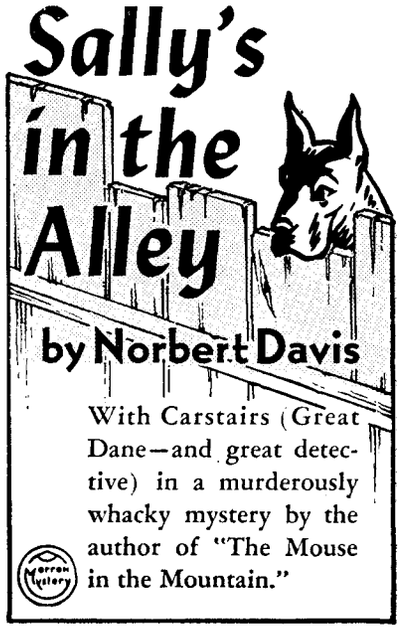
> One day as Phillips Brooks, the great Preacher, landed on the Boston boat dock, he was met by some devoted ones of his flock who stood about, while his trunks were going through the customs. (You remember in our travel days how the American inspectors used to spill our tooth powder on our evening clothes, and give us such further attentions as were designed to emphasize the fact that we were once more in a free country.) They were doing this to the bishop, and one of his parishioners said to him, archly, "Well, Bishop Brooks, I reckon you've brought home a lot of new religions you'll have to pay duty on!" "No," replied the bishop with a twinkle, "I'd never make that mistake. I'd never bring home to the American people any religion with duties attached."

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE WEIGHT OF THE EVIDENCE *Michael Innes* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Falling meteorite extinguishes English college professor. Appleby of Scotland Yard takes over.	First class puzzle, deftly solved. University background interesting and amusing—in scholarly way. Action rather leisurely.	For adepts
CATS CLAW *D. B. Olsen* (Crime Club: $2.)	Two California murders involve spinster sisters and long-suffering detective friend.	Pleasant and action-packed tale—for those who don't mind omniscient old ladies and sundry loose ends.	Pretty good
NINTH FLOOR MIDDLE CITY TOWER *Kerry O'Neil* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Shooting of unscruplous Phila. business man puts girl on spot. Private detective Maloney saves her.	Forthright tale of Quaker City skulduggery with some well-portrayed sub-world characters and a Quixotic sleuth.	Fair


Sally's in the Alley
by Norbert Davis
With Carstairs (Great Dane—and great detective) in a murderously whacky mystery by the author of "The Mouse in the Mountain."
Morrow Mystery

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The Crostics Club

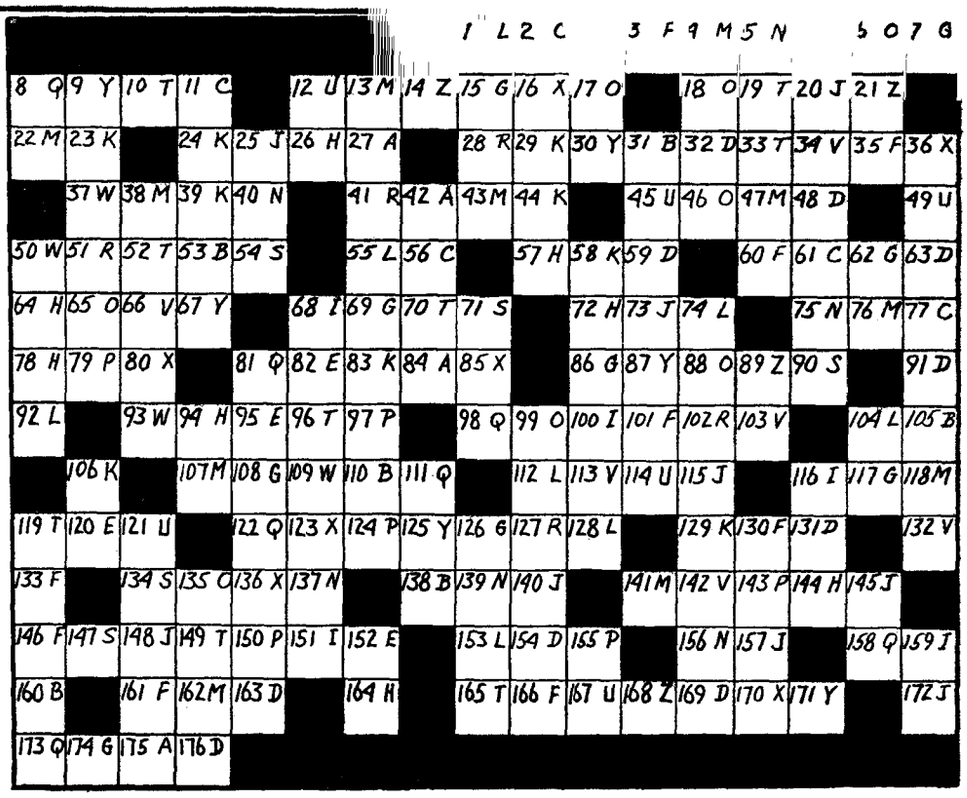
MRS. C. R. RICHARDS, Pelham Manor, N. Y., no doubt in reply to my query for constructive suggestions, in a note of general appreciation wonders which of my "erudite minions" was responsible for *echea* and who cares that bronze vases under the seats in an ancient Greek theatre was called *echea*. She also questions the use of two- and three-lettered words, which, she adds, give so little satisfaction. I am glad of these objections raised, to give me a chance to express my point of view. Words such as Mrs. Richards cites do, unquestionably, make puzzling more difficult. The limitations in the use of words beginning with E, I, O, L, N, R, become evident after one has kept company with them for years. In a spare moment count the pages given to each letter of the alphabet in your WNI. *Echea,* I confess, was a pleasant find, utilized at the same time an *h*, and gave you a bit of ancient history which archaeology, now that the "common man" has been fighting in Greece and the Near East, will probably unearth in the future. (Incidentally, I should welcome usable lists of words from "erudite minions" or anyone else!)

Very recently I inserted in a DC the word *noumenon*. It fitted my need, although the length and metaphysical nature of its definition weighed against it: An unknowable object whose existence is theoretically problematical, like God and the soul. Imagine my surprise when in thumbing the pages of Ogden Nash the very next day, "Has anybody seen my Noumenon?" caught my eye as a title to one of his emanations. With characteristic understanding he had supplied a footnote to this effect: An object known only to intuition apart from the senses. One could readily surmise how such a word fitted into the quirks of a humorist's brain.

How many of you not professional mechanics knew the use of the word *journal* mentioned in the newspapers as the probable cause of the tragic P.R.R. wreck? Yet, had I used that word in a DC with that definition, my head would have been at stake: That portion of a rotating shaft, axle, spindle, etc., which turns in a bearing. (The picture given of a *Journal Box* made the application most clear.)

As for the use of two- and three-lettered words it is a matter of necessity. If a quotation contains 185 letters and the Acrostic, twenty-five words, the average word needed contains over seven letters. A phrase or longer currently used expression helps to use up the excess of t's, h's, e's, etc., as no single word of the same length as a rule does, besides affording variety of outlet; for example, *keep the peace, feel one's way.* I try to limit such to twelve letters.

E. S. K.



Double-Crostics: No. 496

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1940 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 9 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Cod-like fish *(Merluccius).*

B. To release from an engagement (2 wds.)

C. English Dyke—remains of an entrenchment Wye to Dee Rivers.

D. To hunt to its hiding place (3 wds.)

E. Mount of the Rockies in Colorado.

F. Domremy heroine.

G. To arrest; understand.

H. Parting as applied to a shaft, shot, arrow (Scythian).

I. Displayed ostentatiously.

J. Beneficed clergy who refused to take oath of allegiance in 1688—England.

K. Primitive religion of the Ural-Altaic peoples of Siberia.

L. Scottish pioneer in Anthropology (1714-99) (ourang-outang).

M. Seat of Queen Victoria's death.

N. The New Testament "mite."

O. Acts which damage, harm, hurt.

P. Periodical started by Steele (1709) (with *The*).

Q. Made suitable.

R. To forgive; pardon; abate.

S. Country bumpkin.

T. French philosopher and essayist (1533-92).

U. Hymn of praise or gladness.

V. Volcanic peak in Calif.

W. First name of hero of "Romola."

X. Made Secretary of State at Webster's death.

Y. 17th & 18th centuries sword.

Z. First name of Irish dramatist (1884-).

WORDS

42 175 84 27

53 160 110 31 105 138

77 56 2 61 11

163 154 176 131 91 59 63 32 169 48

152 120 82 95

60 130 101 35 133 161 3 166 146

7 62 174 69 15 108 117 126 86

78 72 26 57 94 144 164 64

68 159 151 100 116

20 157 73 172 148 145 25 140 115

23 58 106 24 39 129 83 44 29

112 55 92 153 104 74 128 1

22 13 4 76 162 118 107 43 47 38 141

5 137 75 156 139 40

46 18 6 88 99 135 65 17

155 124 150 79 143 97

173 98 81 8 122 111 158

51 127 102 28 41

71 147 90 54 134

70 11 10 33 52 96 165 148 119

12 114 121 45 167 49

66 142 34 103 132 113

93 109 37 50

85 136 80 123 170 16 36

87 9 30 125 67 171

14 21 168 89

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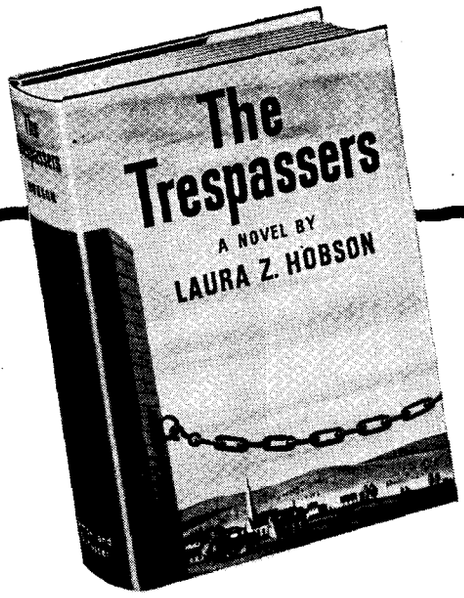

Critics, booksellers and readers join in tribute to Laura Z. Hobson's powerful new novel

Critics

SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE: "Gratifying in that it brings to the novel a breadth and depth so often lacking in entertainment fiction. Jasper Crown is a character destined for discussion, dissension and disbelief. Two or three men in public life are sure to be taken as the prototypes of this radio tycoon. *The Trespassers* is a novel that deserves readers. It has something to say and it says it with both sincerity and vigor."

LEWIS GANNETT: "It is Laura Hobson's achievement, that while she leaves you ashamed of the record, she also leaves you not without faith, and meanwhile tells an engrossing story. Her grim little interludes of notes on the refugees have a terrific emotional impact. Written from a full heart."

NEW YORK HERALD-TRIBUNE BOOKS: "So good a job is this first novel of Mrs. Hobson's that I believe it is not out of order to suggest that she has invaded Nancy Hale's and Clare Boothe's field, 'the women', and, in one respect at least, beaten both at their own game—chiefly, perhaps, because Mrs. Hobson imparts more meaning, more significant character-in-the-making, into the people she creates and the story she tells about them. She is a writer of large ideas."

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Booksellers

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The Trespassers

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